

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: PINT, GR

SUBJECT: NORTHERN GREEK REACTION TO GOG DECISION ON DEATH SENTENCES

1. NORTHERN GREEK PRESS REACTION TO GOVERNMENT'S
DECISION TO COMMUTE DEATH SENTENCES OF
JUNTA LEADERS LARGELY MIRRORED THAT IN ATHENS RE-
PORTED REF. MAJORITY OF LOCAL PAPERS CARRIED RE-
PORTS CRITICAL OF GOG ACTION UNDER SUCH
FRONT PAGE BANNERS AS "POLITICAL STORM ON ISSUE OF
"GRACE": CLIMATE OF POLITICAL CRISIS CREATED AFTER
DECISION" (THESSALONIKI, AUG 25): "GENERAL OUTCRY
OVER GOVERNMENT'S HASTE IN OFFERING CLEMENCY
TO TYRANTS: GREAT POLITICAL STORM AND GENERAL
REACTION AGAINST "INDULGENCES" TO TRAITORS" (MAKE-
DONIA, AUG. 26).

2. RIGHTIST ELLINIKOS VORRAS
HOWEVER DEFENDED
ACTION WITH "GOVERNMENT EXPLAINS FEAR OF "REPER-
CUSSIONS IF NO STAND IMMEDIATELY TAKEN ON DEATH
SENTENCES: ACCUSES OPPOSITION OF LACK OF RESPONSI-
BILITY: KARAMANLIS NOT ACTING UNDER CONDITIONS".

3. ACCOMPANYING FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL CASTIGATES THOSE
CRITICAL OF DECISION SAYING THAT GOG, FACING UP TO
POLITICAL REALITY, ACTED IN LONG TERM INTERESTS OF
UNCLASSIFIED

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GREEK PEOPLE. SINCE JULY 1974 " POLITICAL
OPPORTUNISTS" HAVE CREATED AND PROMOTED "SUPPOSED",
AS OPPOSED TO "EXISTING" POLITICAL REALITY. THIS
"SUPPOSED" REALITY PERMITS PEOPLE TO ACCEPT

FALSE CONCEPTS THAT ARE AGREEABLE, AND TO REJECT
UNPLEASANT TRUTHS. IT IS NOT TRUE, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT
ONLY TWENTY PEOPLE WERE ABLE IN 1967 TO "TRAP POLITICAL AND
MILITARY LEADERSHIP OF COUNTRY" IN ONE NIGHT, WITHOUT BLOODSHED,
AND TO "IMPOSE THEIR DICTATORSHIP-- FOR SEVEN AND A HALF YEARS
UNDISTURBED". SUCH TRUTHS MAY BE BITTER BUT "WE MUST ADMIT THEM
IF
WE ARE TO STAND ON FIRM GROUND AND NOT THAT SUCH AS LED UP
TO APRIL 21 ERA". MANY PEOPLE WHOM KARAMANLIS CONSIDERS
"IRRESPONSIBLE" FIND IT MORE CONVENIENT TO ACT "BEHIND GREAT MORAL
AND POLITICAL STATURE " OF KARAMANLIS AND TO STAB HIM IN BACK,
FAILING TO UNDERSTAND THAT, IN SO DOING, "THEY STAB DEMOCRACY,
THE PEOPLE AND GREECE ITSELF". GOVERNMENT HAD RIGHT AND DUTY
TO HANDLE MATTERS AS IT DID AND CANNOT CALL FOR ELECTIONS EVERY
TIME IT FACES SERIOUS DECISION. THOSE WHO ARE SHOUTING NOW,
EDITORIAL CONCLUDES, ARE SAME WHO UNANIMOUSLY CONSIDERED APRIL
21 AS POLITICAL CRIME WHEN CRIME WAS BEFORE COURTS, AND CONSTI-
TUTION BARS DEATH FOR POLITICAL CRIMES.
BRENNAN

UNCLASSIFIED

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